



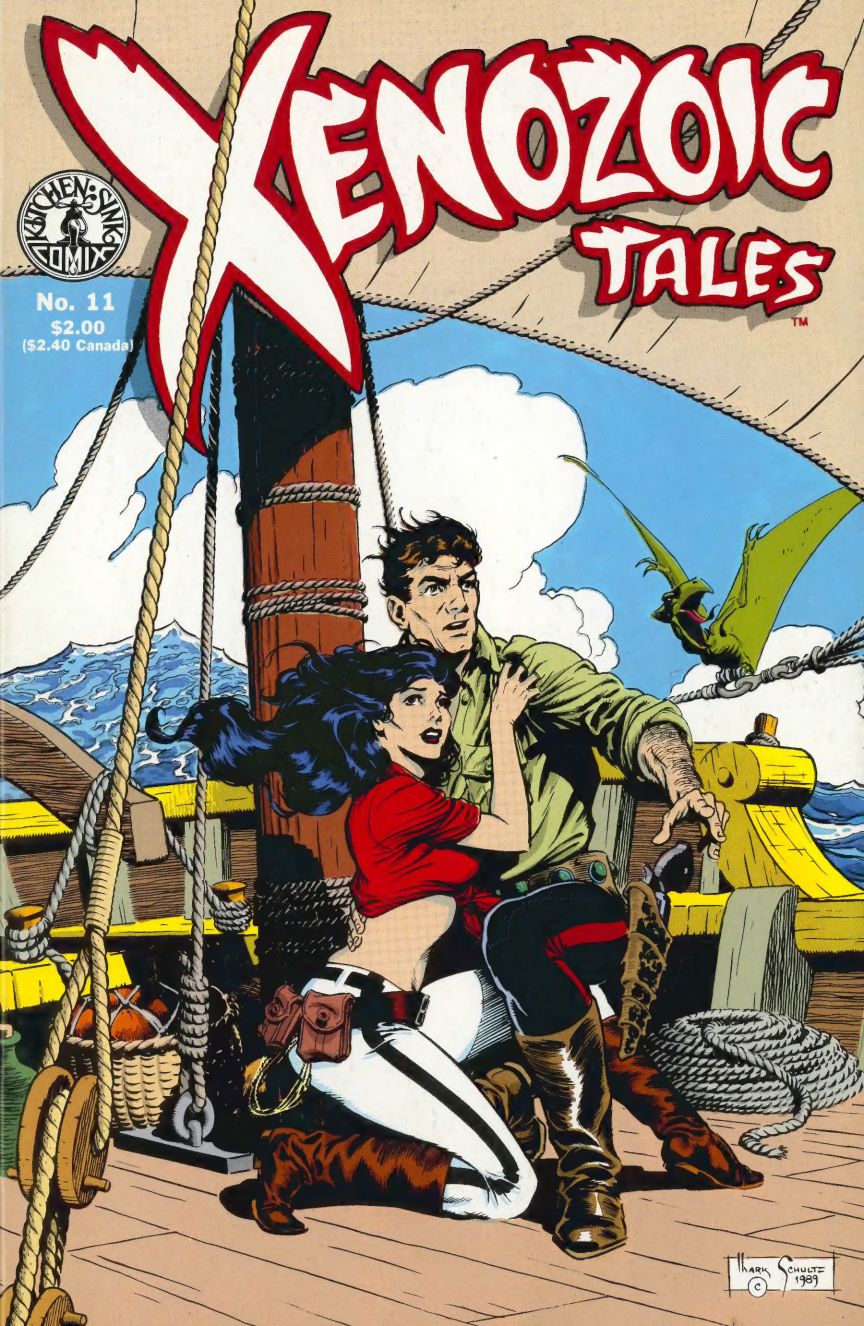
No. 11

\$2.00

(\$2.40 Canada)

XENOZOIC TALES

TM



MARK SCHULTZ
© 1989

WELCOME TO THE XENOZOIC!

MARK SCHULTZ: *Writer and artist*

STEVE STILES: *Second story art*

DENISE PROWELL: *Lettering*

RAY FEHRENBACH: *Cover color*

JAN MANWEILER: *Production*

PAULA SOHN: *Circulation*

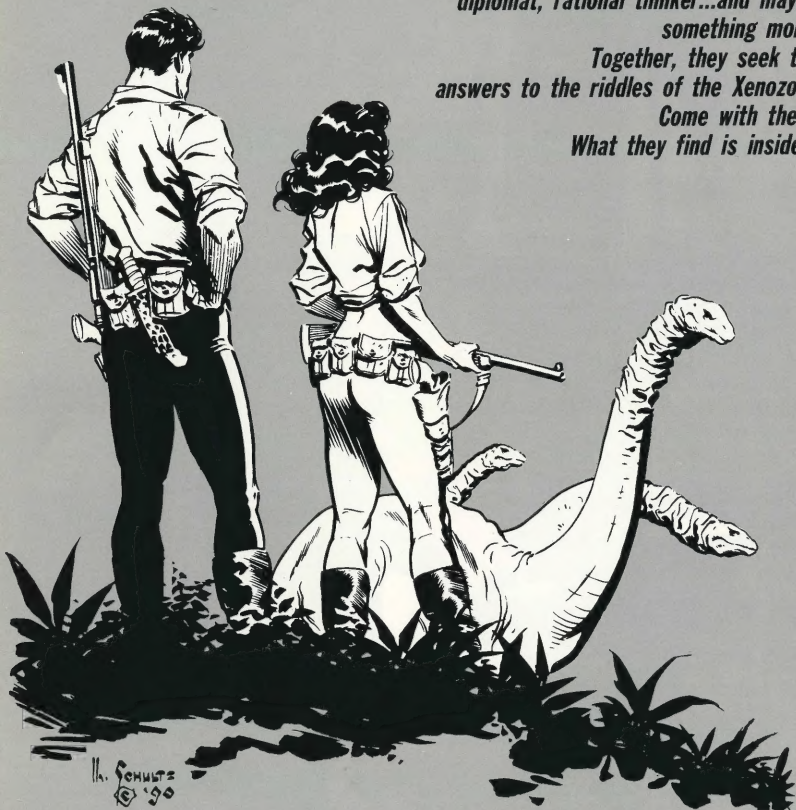
DAVE SCHREINER: *Editor*

DENIS KITCHEN: *Publisher*

Welcome to a world gone mad. In the Xenozoic, dinosaurs roam with humans and old cars race brand new woolly mammoths. In this future time, all of Earth's ages have blended. Two people want to find out why. They are Jack Tenrec, part mechanic, part nature shaman, full time hothead; and Hannah Dundee, scientist, diplomat, rational thinker...and maybe something more.

Together, they seek the answers to the riddles of the Xenozoic.

*Come with them.
What they find is inside...*



Xenozoic Tales #11. April 1991. Published by Kitchen Sink Press, Inc., No. 2 Swamp Rd., Princeton WI 54968. Entire contents copyright © 1991 by Mark Schultz. All rights reserved. Any resemblance to any person living or dead is unintentional. Price: \$2.00 U.S., \$2.40 Canada. **Letters:** We welcome letters of comment. Mail them to the address above, c/o "Xenozoic Express". **Retailers:** Contact us for distribution information. **Readers and collectors:** Drop a line for our free catalog, listing all our fine books, comics and merchandise, including *Cadillacs & Dinosaurs* and *Dinosaur Shaman*, Mark Schultz's first two collections; also the *Xenozoic Tales* t-shirts and back issues; and the new candy bars and boxes. Printed in USA.

PRIMEVAL

A
LUCKY SHOT,
HANNAH.

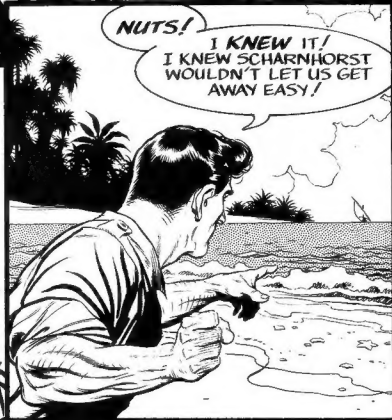
FEH!
A DAMN GOOD
SHOT.

AN ARCHER
CAN BECOME A
VERY EFFECTIVE
HUNTER.

I'LL STICK
WITH MY GUN,
JUST THE
SAME.

YOU'LL
LEARN TO ADAPT
TO *OUR* WAYS
ONCE YOU COME
TO WASSOON ...



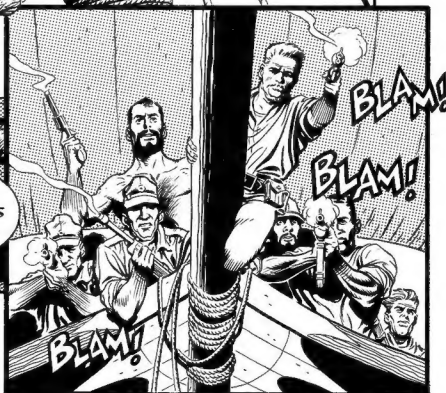




©*/©*/
SCHARNHORST!

SHE'S BEATEN
ME! WHY CAN'T SHE
LEAVE ME ALONE?

SHE
FEARS
YOU.



BLAM!

BLAM!



IT'S GETTING AWFULLY SHALLOW...

I KNOW...

I ALSO
KNOW THAT
TUB BEHIND US
HAS A DEEPER
DRAFT THAN
OURS.

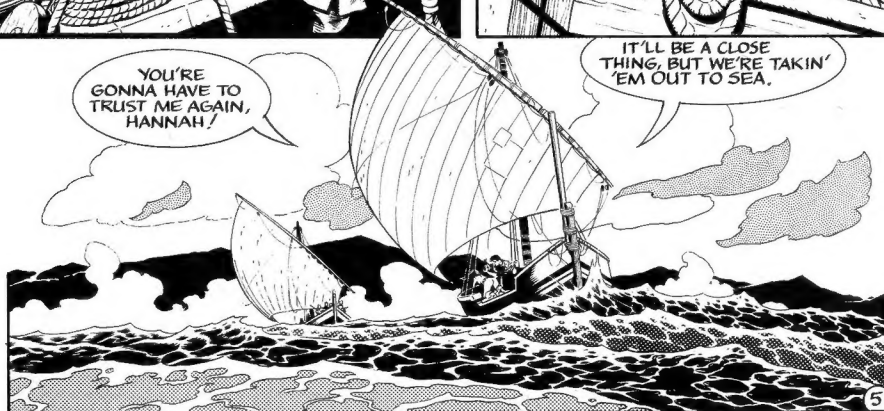
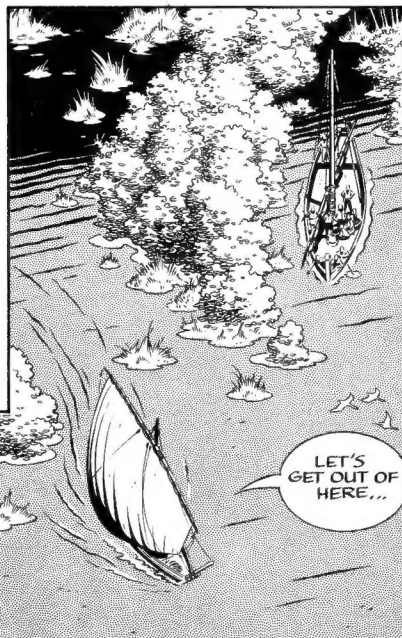


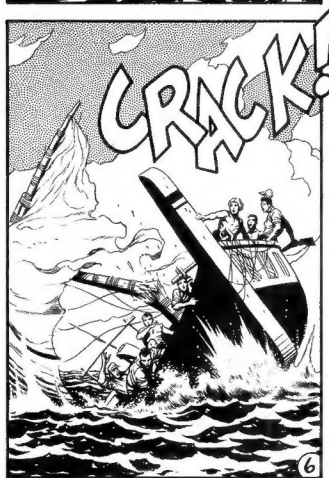
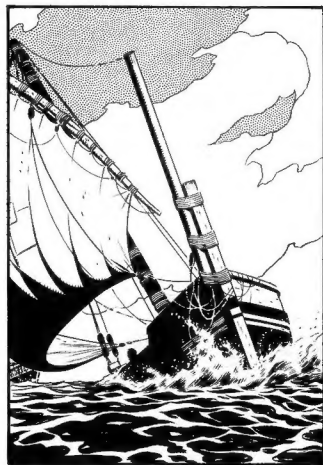
THERE!

SHE'S HIT
BOTTOM!



YUWW
EEEE!



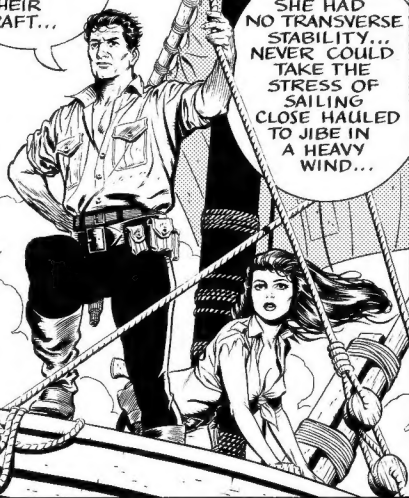




THEY SHOULD
FAMILIARIZED
THEMSELVES
WITH
THEIR
CRAFT...

MUSTAPHA AND I BUILT
THAT SHIP... A REAL
SPEEDSTER...

BUT
SHE HAD
NO TRANSVERSE
STABILITY...
NEVER COULD
TAKE THE
STRESS OF
SAILING
CLOSE HAULED
TO JIBE IN
A HEAVY
WIND...



STILL,
THAT WAS
VERY
CLOSE...

AND
NOW WE'RE
OUT TOO
FAR.

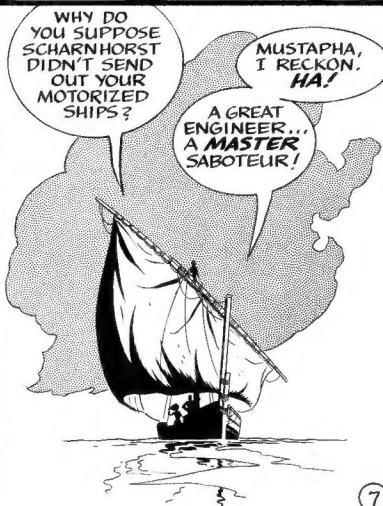
YEAH,
AND WE'LL BE
FIGHTING THE WIND
ALL THE WAY
BACK IN.



WHY DO
YOU SUPPOSE
SCHARNHORST
DIDN'T SEND
OUT YOUR
MOTORIZED
SHIPS?

MUSTAPHA,
I RECKON.
HA!

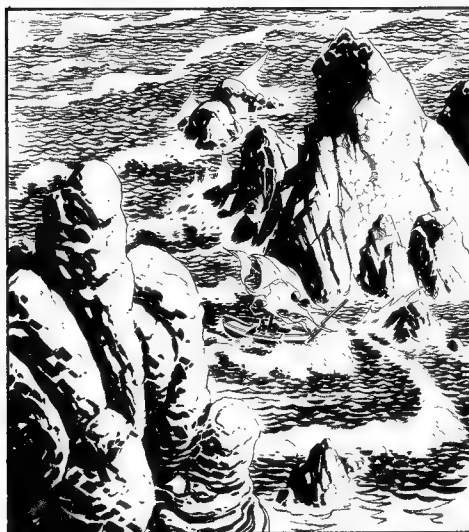
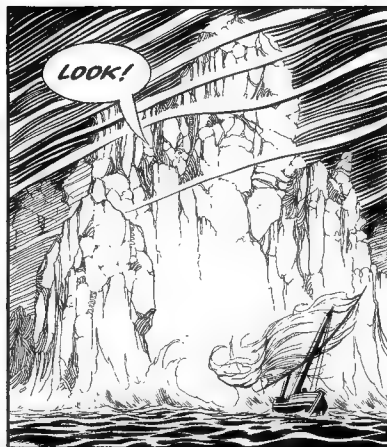
A GREAT
ENGINEER...
A MASTER
SABOTEUR!

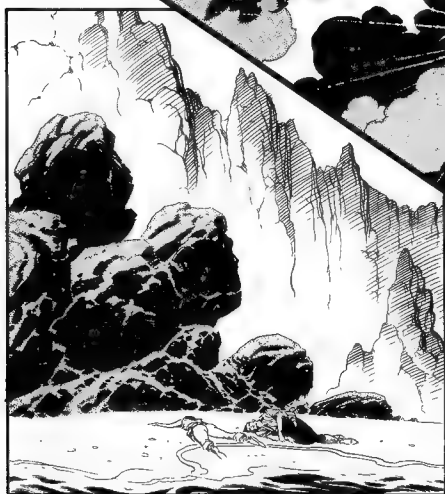












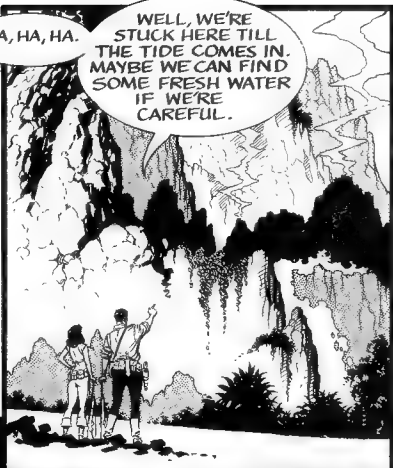


I DON'T
THINK THESE THINGS
HAVE DEVELOPED
A SENSE OF
FEAR...

AND THEY'LL
APPARENTLY EAT
ANYTHING.

HA, HA, HA.

WELL, WE'RE
STUCK HERE TILL
THE TIDE COMES IN.
MAYBE WE CAN FIND
SOME FRESH WATER
IF WE'RE
CAREFUL.



LOOK AT
THIS PLACE...
CRAWLIN' WITH
LIFE!

MAYBE
LIFE *DID*
EVOLVE ALONG
DIFFERENT LINES
HERE...

MAYBE THE
INVERTEBRATES
FILLED ALL THE
NICHES IN THE
BALANCE AND
LEFT NO ROOM
FOR FURTHER
EVOLU-
TIONARY
TRENDS.

MAYBE
THIS IS A
VESTIGE
OF THE
ANCIENTS'
WORLD...

MAYBE.

GET READY...

HERE
COMES
TROUBLE







NO WONDER
NOTHIN' ELSE
LIVES
HERE!



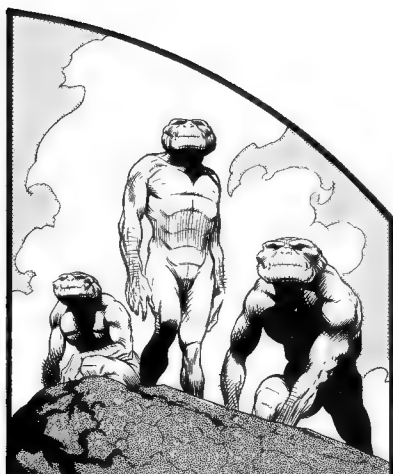
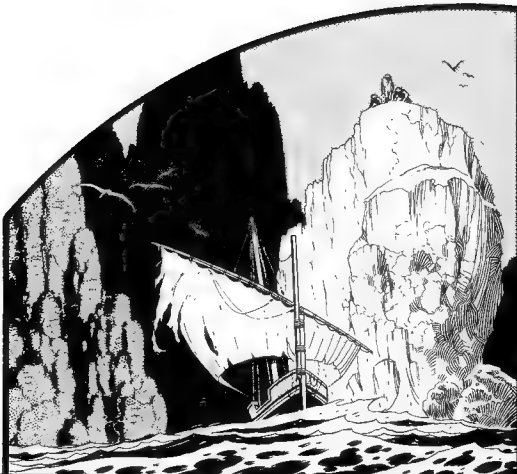
WE CAN'T
HOLD OFF
THIS MANY...











NEXT
WASSOON

XENOZOIC EXPRESS



Mark Schultz was named "Best Artist of 1990" by the Harvey Award voters at the Dallas Fantasy Fair last July. Congratulations to him!

And welcome to *Xenozoic Tales* No. 11; hope you at least *looked* at the stories by Schultz and Steve Stiles before you got to the good part of the book: "Xenozoic Express". Outside of the usual embarrassing fawning over Schultz's work—don't get me wrong, the embarrassing fawning is entirely justified—there are a lot of comments, cracks, and complaints below about the lo-o-o-ng delay between issues. You'd think the last one came out during the Jurassic Period. It's like this: if you want it quick—monthly, bi-monthly, quarterly—the Mark Schultz art you've come to love so much, it might not be so lovable anymore. You can't rush quality, apparently. God knows we've tried. We browbeat the guy *daily* to speed his production, and it helps not a whit. He just painstakingly...ploddingly...*painfully* writes...then pencils...then inks his superbly-crafted, beautiful stories at his own snail-like pace. What can you do with somebody who takes his art seriously and doesn't hack it out, somebody who cuts against the grain of common American enterprise and actually cares about what he produces?

How about enjoying the work when it finally does come in?

Xenozoic Tales No. 12 will be out next month. In it, Jack and Hannah fight a fierce race of mutants with long fingernails, screechy voices and skimpy costumes who constantly unburden themselves of their deep feelings of alienation toward the world and each other. Nahh... that's not true. But *Xenozoic Tales* 12 will have some surprises. Watch for it, um, whenever...

—Dave Schreiner

IMPATIENT WAITER

I am a 55-year-old Schultz fan (the senior group of comic fans)—who is *impatiently* waiting for *Xenozoic Tales* —11. We got our —10 on May 4, 1990 at Comic Relief in Berkeley, but enough time is enough!! There are folks waiting for new *Xenozoic* material.

We appreciate the Epic color (too dark, too heavy...but still good quality and paper), *Dinosaur Shaman*, the candy bars and the other Schultz covers...but it's not same as a new 20-page story. Please respond. Thank you.

Lawrence F. Merrion

1036 Mariposa Ave., Berkeley CA 94707

We hope this new issue of *Xenozoic Tales* is a good enough response for you, Lawrence. Glad you like all the other *Xenozoic* material out there.

IDIOMATICS?

Wur gawnuh thu chapl an wur gawnuh get marreed: wur gawnuh thu chapl uv luv.

I do read every issue of *Xenozoic Tales* that I buy and I have bought each issue without fail. I buy it because I enjoy reading it but the

letters page in issue No. 10 really sucked (no reflection on the individual letter writers); it was so nearly nothing but praise that I blinked and checked the cover to make sure I was not reading a Marvel Comics letters page by mistake.

We're going to the chapel and we're going to get married: we're going to the chapel of love.

Written English makes an occasional concession to spoken English, e.g. contractions such as I'm, shouldn't've, etc, even to the extent of sometimes being built (builted?) right in.

Sadly, Schultz the writer has exhibited in *Xenozoic Tales* No. 10 an annoying tendency, in attempting to capture the flavor of spoken English which is idiomatic, to serve up a writing style which is idiosyncratic. He'd do well to eschew further attempts to write accents.

If an actor's line reads, "You know, I've got to say something and I'm going to say it: something's coming—something big," he can deliver it as, "Y'know, I gotta say su'm' an' I'm gonna say it: something's comin'—somethin' big," but

I would surely hope not to see it written that way. Few writers can pull it off. Eisner did, a few times.

Eyes hear differently than ears do.

The storyline is proceeding along traditional science fiction lines: contemporary social and political issues are presented through the guise of a fictional society's struggles and conflicts. Ecology, of course, is the theme, and it is fairly timely, though the issue's release was a little late for Earth Day 10.

Personally, I dispute the upshot of Schultz's theme. In real life, I decry big government's hassling farmers for shooting wolves or spraying with alar; but in spite of Schultz's views, his depiction of the eco-villain as a grotesquely fat lady with enormous breasts, an ugly wicked face (to match her ugly wicked strong arm tactics) and well-developed arm muscles (strong arms) was effectively repulsive and absolutely hilarious. What happens when Ma Barker messes with Mother Nature?

I have been saying it to myself for more than 10 issues and now I say it to all of you: *Xenozoic* has definite potential.

David Malcolm Porta

3213 19th Ave., Sacramento CA 95820-3801

After reading this letter, I checked *Xenozoic Tales* 10 for evidence of Schultz's "writing accents," and I'm damned if I can find any. There's a "Ye" for "You" and a "gotta" and a "doin'", but I wouldn't call that "writing accents." As for *Xenozoic Tales* missing Earth Day 10—yes, it did. By 10 years. Incidentally, I didn't know there were all that many wolves around anymore for eternally beleaguered and perpetually harassed farmers to shoot. Anyone who would condone the shooting of the pathetically few number of wolves left in the wilds of North America is an ignoramus. At least. And anyone who doesn't mind eating a chemical cosmetic because a knee jerk philosophy tells him that "big government" is always bad and "small business" is always good...is, well...a fool. But, hey, have a nice day.

ONE THING

It was a lazy Sunday afternoon. I'd sprawled out on my bed and read the latest issue of *Xenozoic Tales*, No. 10. There's a lot of things I could say about this classy, truly satisfying book, but it all comes down to one thing. I love it!

Scott Tilson

123 Vista Dr., Streetsville, Ontario, L5M 1W2

(Continued on page 22)

ALMOST IDYLIC

Somehow it seems almost idyllic, having just finished issue 10 of *Xenozoic Tales* while listening to Procul Harum and sipping tea. This stirred memories of a time twenty years ago when I first heard Procul Harum and discovered Edgar Rice Burroughs and Robert E. Howard in the sixth grade. Ah, time is just a circle and memories are sweet.

While many speak of Mark Schultz's artwork and compare it with some of the greats like Wood, Williamson and Frazetta, I wish to thank him for his ability through both art and words to bring back in me the wonder and excitement I felt when I first experienced the visions of Burroughs and Howard in the mind's eye of a 12-year-old. Not many things can bring such a nice gentle pleasure as a sitting with a copy of *Xenozoic Tales* in one's hands.

Thank you truly,

Willie R. Mellen

1861 Dieter St., Maplewood MN 55109

Procul Harum??

LIMEY'S OPINIONS

I first heard of XT at a signing session attended by Mark Schultz in Brussels last November. I stumbled across it to see Schultz busily doodling away for the indigenous population. I didn't think about it again until recently when I happened across the *Cadillacs & Dinosaurs* collection. I got as far as the introduction—hey, if someone like Al Williamson rates it, then it's worth a try. Except I bought all the back issues, too—Nos. 1-8. I'm not much of a letterhacker, so I'll leave the postulating and pontification of alleged impact upon Schultz's work arising from the wart on his left buttock to others, and just say: brilliant! Concise short stories, with characterization and inter-relationships developing quite nicely. And usually a moral to the story.

I'd like to contribute to two areas of discussion in your letters pages. First, the supposed EC influence on Schultz's art. I can't see this myself, other than the surface touches of the aforementioned *Cadillacs* and *dinosaurs*. These represent the '50s to me, but I couldn't honestly say they specifically represent EC, other than by creating that '50s ambience. With the exception of some remarkably Williamonesque inking on some of the background (specifically rocky terrain) and the cover of No. 9 (wasn't until I spotted the credit on the cover that I realised where I'd seen it before!), the art goes back to the '30s. There's a soft edge to the brushwork, shown to its best effect on

the lush vegetation, which harks back to the great newspaper strips such as *Jungle Jim*, *Flash Gordon*, *The Phantom* and *Mandrake*, all rolled into one. But hey! I'm a limey, what do I know...

XT 9, I would presume, has solicited an avalanche of mail in response to Ken Feduniewicz's letter. [Actually, no. Yours is the first.—Ed.] He's obviously venting his spleen for some reason, but I'm not clear as to who or what in particular has upset him so—his letter cleverly omits specifics or examples to support his case. I don't know who these fan favourites are, but I'd like to answer him. I disagree with his (mis)understanding of what comics are all about, and thus with who the good artists are. I also disagree with his assessment of what characterizes a fan favourite.

I think it was George Olshewsky who said that the main reason comics aren't taken seriously as art is that there is no formal criteria, or even a consensus, as to what constitutes good comics. You can't therefore make absolute qualitative assessments of the material produced. I'll propose the idea that they are a synthesis of words and pictures—complementing one another. I'd say that comics fall down when either becomes more important—Don McGregor, Alan Moore and EC at its most verbose, or the excesses of the Spanish Warren artists. Now, Warren artists can draw the pants off the opposition, but do they produce good comics? [Not anymore.] Not to my mind—ever tried reading one of their stories, especially if they had a hand in writing it? I would also suggest that the intricate detail also covers up the poor draughtsmanship—notice how poor Gonzalo Mayo's portrayal of anatomy is. I'd point out examples of good comics—those artists who tell stories with an elegant simplicity of line, whether in comic books (like Toth) or in strips (like Crane, Caniff, etc.). These latter examples are good comics artists whose trademarks are those very qualities maligned by Feduniewicz.

As to fan favourites—well, the average fan being a prime example of arrested intellectual development, they go for whoever draws their favourite superhero team book—especially anybody connected with the X-Men. I don't credit fans with the critical facilities to judge good artists. And they don't: look at the polls. I doubt the criteria I suggested for judging good comics would occur to fandom at large—as long as it has "flash", it must be so. Ken, you keep your Mike Grels, Vince Collettas, Gonzalo Mayos and others with detailed

styles, and I'll keep to those who have an idea of storytelling, design and comics: Toth, Kubert, Chaykin, Schultz, etc.

Yes, I forgot one of the qualities of Schultz's work that I like. Despite his obvious facility with the brush, the artistic pyrotechnics are never allowed to detract from the story they help to tell.

As for some artists being loudmouths, well, perhaps that's a good thing if it raises fandom above the arrant nonsense expounded by Feduniewicz. No doubt they are as pissed off with the mentality exhibited by the views expressed as I am. I can't believe this is the same guy that put *Third Rail* together.

Tim Bones

103 Tredworth Rd., Gloucester, England

THANKS GOD

Thank God for Mark Schultz and the fantastic *Xenozoic Tales*! I've been a fan of this title from day one and I must say Mark is exceeding my wildest expectations. I really don't mind that this title comes out so infrequently, because it's obvious that Mark puts a lot of time and energy into each issue—and each issue is showing marked improvement over the last. I would love to see *Xenozoic Tales* come out on a monthly basis, but I think that would be impossible.

With each issue, Mark is advancing into the realm known to very few, the realm of "immortal classicism". Foster, Raymond, Krenkel, Frazetta, Williamson, Wrightson, J. Jones and modern name luminaries such as Moebius, Milo Manara and Hugo Pratt. Instead of taking the usual crappy, phony, "stylistic" approach of most modern day comics artists, Schultz has instead chosen to follow his own vision. *Xenozoic Tales* No. 10 is a triumph, from the absolutely exquisite splash page with its flawless design and brushwork, to certain breathtaking panels (among them page 3 panel 2, page 11 panel 6, page 5 panels 3 and 6).

In closing I just have to let my admiration for Mark Schultz's work be known. Mark is the best thing to happen to comics since Moebius. Mark Schultz is quite simply the greatest working American comic book artist, period!

John F. Kelly

901 Broad St., Shrewsbury NJ 07702

Amén, already!

POIGNANT JACK

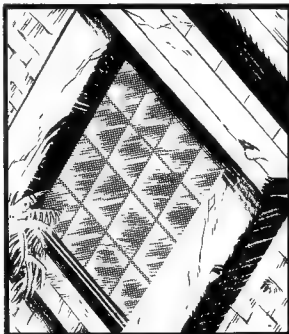
I have just finished reading *Death Rattle 8* and *Xenozoic Tales* 1, 2, 8, 9 and 10. I am in the process of ordering the issues I do not have. What a series!

(Continued on page 32)

Dear Governor Dahlgren,
Although the thought of
this communication falling
into unfriendly hands
fills me with dread...

I feel it necessary that you
be kept apprised of my
efforts to mount an
effective resistance,

So I take this
calculated risk.
Do not attempt
to reply.



REPORT FROM THE RESISTANCE

As long as your true loyalties remain
unsuspected by Scharnhorst and the
other governors, you remain uniquely
positioned to curb the growing damage.

I know I am seeing the effects of your
mitigating influence whenever any of
Scharnhorst's more radical proposals to
the council are even slightly diluted.



Steve
Stiles

So much has changed in the last few weeks since I last saw both you and Jack Tenrec. Scharnhorst has created a black whirlwind. She is truly driven to reshape our world to her sick vision!



I'm sure you know as well as I the Scar's her new farming policies will leave on the land.



We also hear of her plans to expand operations at the copper mines...



...while cutting and blasting a roadway connecting the mines to the city.



She's even begun drilling for oil!

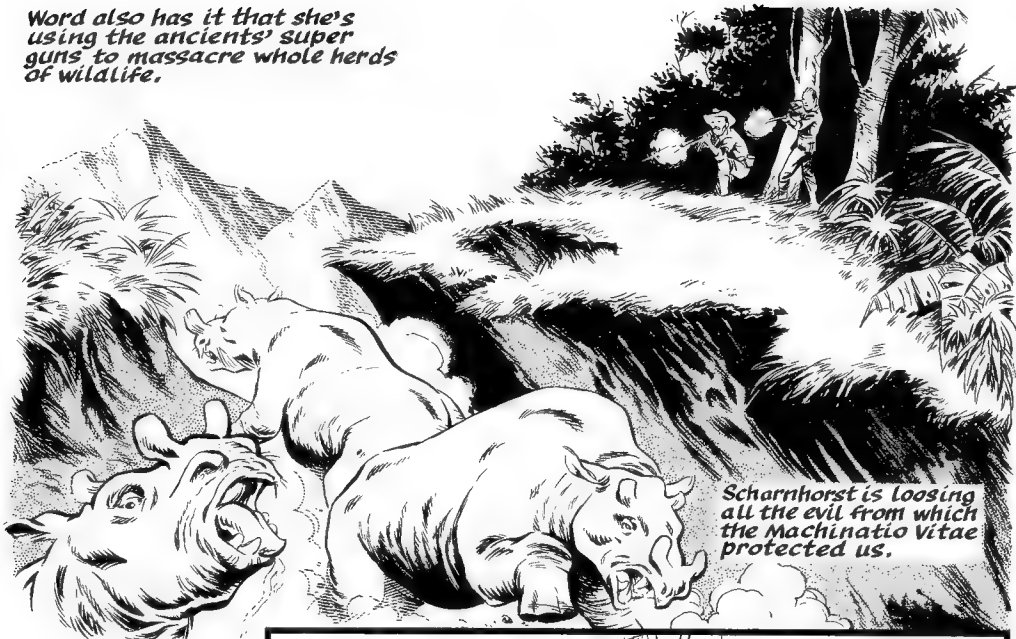


(Tenrec would go berserk if he learned of this.)

And to effect all this she continues to pull more powerful and sinister technologies from the vaults, all of them wisely forbidden by the Old Bloods.

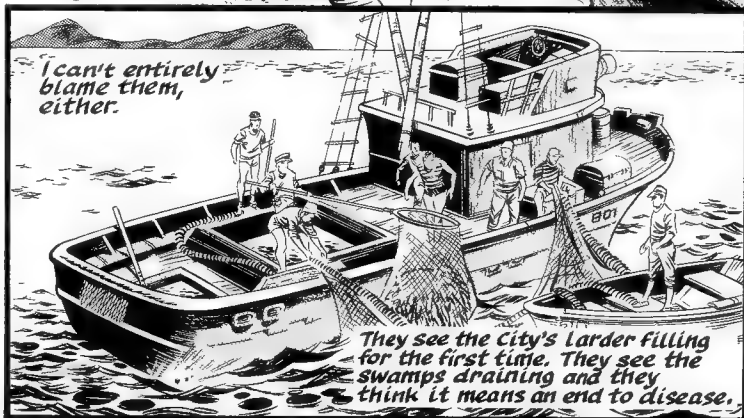


Word also has it that she's using the ancients' super guns to massacre whole herds of wildlife.



Scharnhorst is loosing all the evil from which the Machinatiao Vitae protected us.

But the tribe majority continue to see her as a savior, even as they gasp at her blasphemous policies.



I can't entirely blame them, either.

They see the City's Larder filling for the first time. They see the swamps draining and they think it means an end to disease.

But they ignore what they know to be true. Someday the balance will come due.



The fools! Can't they feel the tension already?

I'm sure you've heard about the destruction of Scharnhorst's larder in the Tennagurus section...



My spies had informed me of the great excesses of food Scharnhorst was hoarding there.



They were also able to tell me when the larder would be guarded by only two men.



The vault was crammed with the results of her unsound and dangerous policies. Excess foods forced from the land with no thought for tomorrow, a step further away from the covenant.



We must let Scharnhorst and her fellows know they cannot conduct their imperialistic policies with impunity.



Furthermore, the attention of the tribe must be aroused. I have decided it necessary to resurrect the ancient, ugly practice of terrorism.



Our old friend Hermes has been turned into a "Boogeyman."



Few tribesmen ever knew that Tenrec and Phu-Tsering had raised an eighteen ft. cutter in an abandoned quarter of the city. Even fewer would guess he still lives.



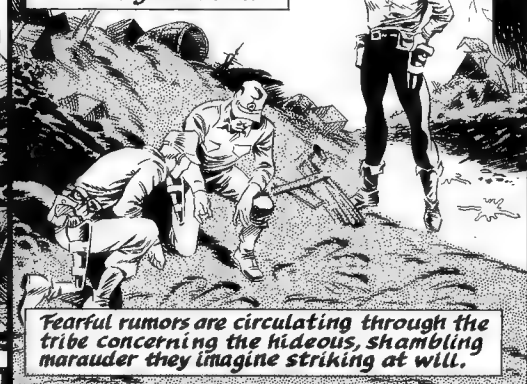
Instead, they fear an unknown terror in their midst. A terror that I hope will lead them to doubt.

Herme's could never be called docile. In his present role he grows increasingly intractable. I know we'll have to release him soon...



Until then he serves us well.

Despite Scharnhorst's attempts to conceal the destruction of her larder, word has gotten out.



Fearful rumors are circulating through the tribe concerning the hideous, shambling marauder they imagine striking at will.

Still, I fear it will be a long campaign before the tribe turns from its new found "prosperity."



What do you know, Governor Dahlgren, about Scharnhorst's personal guard, her chosen elite?



Let me tell you what I have learned.

In attempts to raise support for the resistance I have paid visits to certain tribesmen I thought remained in sympathy with the Doctrine.



Sometimes I win a new supporter, sometimes I make a mistake.





Alvarado the blacksmith turned out to be a lost cause, a wasted effort.

He let me know in no uncertain terms that he had grown tired of the Old Bloods' restrictive policies and that he was overjoyed by Scharnhorst's progressive actions.

The last thing Alvarado wanted to see was an insurrection.

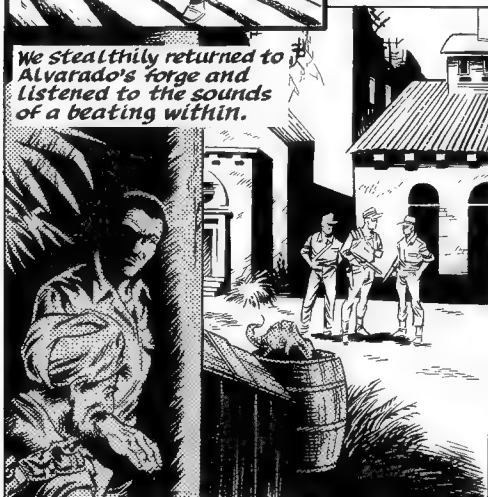


I was careless... I didn't notice when one of Alvarado's assistants slipped away.

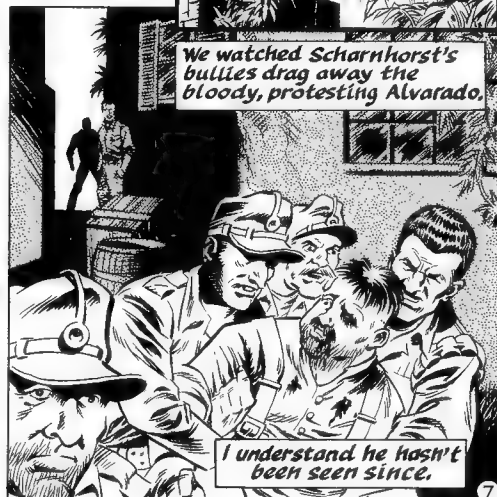


It became very clear that Alvarado wished us to depart immediately. I chose not to test his hospitality.

We had not gone far when we were startled by a great hue and din from the vicinity we had just departed.



We stealthily returned to Alvarado's forge and listened to the sounds of a beating within.



We watched Scharnhorst's bullies drag away the bloody, protesting Alvarado.

I understand he hasn't been seen since.

The truth is, Alvarado knew nothing of our resistance, he remained absolutely loyal to Scharnhorst's rotten regime... and yet that wasn't enough.

Scharnhorst is showing her true colors and she isn't taking any chances.



I suppose this is good in that it shows she is beginning to fear us, just as she fears Tenrec, the Doctrine protect him, wherever he may be.



I can not, however, allow my actions to bring harm to others and have so curtailed all unnecessary contact with the tribe.



I know this may seriously limit our effectiveness. But for everyone's safety I must go deeper underground.



I will continue doing whatever I can in support of the Machinatio vitae, with what men and resources I have at hand.



I know you, too, will do what you can... but be cautious! Take no unnecessary risks.



The world is at stake and you are our ace in the hole.

Mustapha Cairo

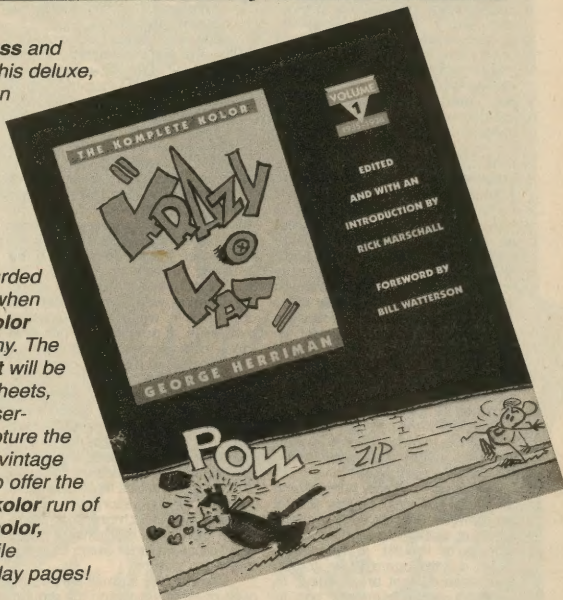
the end



KRAZY KAT

Coming from Kitchen Sink Press and Rick Marschall, this deluxe, jacketed, hardcover edition is the first in a series of seven volumes to reprint the complete, er, **complete kolor** Sunday pages of **George Herriman's Krazy Kat**.

George Herriman is regarded as a comics genius, and when you see the **Komplete Kolor Krazy Kat**, you'll know why. The reproduction of **Krazy Kat** will be from file copies or proof sheets, and the artwork will be laser-scanned separated to capture the original lush tones of this vintage work. The philosophy is to offer the complete, uh, **complete kolor** run of **Krazy Kat** in its **original color**, achieving precise, facsimile reproductions of the Sunday pages!



The set will consist of the complete run of the color **Krazy Kat** page, which started in 1935, and ran through 1944, and will be edited by **Rick Marschall**, who'll provide historical and critical introductions, rare paintings and sketches by **Herriman**, as well as photographs and other items from the cartoonist's personal archives. Rick is also approaching **top creators** in the comics field to contribute forewords to the series. The first volume features a foreword by **Bill Watterson**, award winning creator of **Calvin and Hobbes**.



Komplete Kolor Krazy Kat Vol. 1
96 Pages, Full Color, \$34.95

Jack Tenrec's comments in No. 8 on page 6 were very poignant. "Land shaping...and farms! Good Lord! We need fewer people not more agriculture!" Considering how much humanity has abused the Earth's resources, Jack's comments are in line. People have a problem with seeing themselves as a part of nature. They think that they are above it all. It is a shame. Even in the world of the Xenozoic not many people listen to or subscribe to Jack's theories.

The use of water in the dream sequences in issue 8 was very appropriate. In the beginning all life, as we know it, came out of the ocean. Jack's dream reminds him that he is human and not to try and see himself as beyond that. Hannah's dream reminds her that she is a part of nature, like all things living and unliving and not to try and see herself as being beyond that. It will be interesting to see if these dreams affect the pair in any way.

I also noticed in issue 8 that Jack put on a new pair of pants. It took me several readings before I realized they are black with a white stripe, while Hannah's are white with a black stripe. They both continue to wear these pants through the end of issue 10. **[They wash them between issues, folks.]** Is this Mark Schultz's concept of yin and yang in the Xenozoic? If so, I like it. If not, then why not? Keep up the conflict between the Wassoon ambassador and the shaman. It makes for good reading material.

Reading *Xenozoic Tales* I can't help but think of Jack Kirby's *Kamandi*. Both deal with post-catastrophe earths, but in very different ways. Kirby saw humans and animals reversing places in the world. Mark Schultz sees humanity being decimated and having a chance to rebuild. In *Kamandi*'s world, it is the tigers, lions, gorillas and leopards that are building. In Tenrec's world, humanity has to decide whether to forge a new future or duplicate the past. Those who ignore history are doomed to repeat it. Both series are classics.

David Levine
Washington, D.C.

CUTTING EDGE

I thought issue 10 of *Xenozoic Tales* was the best issue, by far. Certainly, the art was good. But the art is always good...

The thing that hit me most about this issue was the story. The tone has more of a hard edge to it than some of the others: a cutting edge that makes the reader think. That, in itself, is something rare today. Some of the past issues have dealt with the environment of the Xenozoic times, but this issue drew a

close corollary to the politics of our times. It makes readers aware that the emotion of a disaster makes men want to be able to "control" nature so it won't happen again. And that politics thrive and breed on that sentiment. Much the same way Wilhelmina Schamhorst says that she is going to expand farms by forcing back jungles and draining the swamp, Brazil eliminates the rain forest and developers strip forests to put up shopping centers and asphalt parking lots. People give up farm land for housing developments. This is done in the name of "progress."

Being a medical researcher, I question anti-vivisectionists protesting the use of animals in medical research when they don't spend as much time and effort protesting projects done in the name of "progress." Think of all the animals killed and displaced when a forest is cleared for "progress": a bloody shopping center. I don't understand. What purpose will one more shopping center make, one more office building or apartment complex. It serves only the developer. It sure doesn't help the animals. Anyway...

The trouble is nature has a way of claiming what it needs; of taking what it wants. The force of nature is a power man not only does not understand (at all), but most certainly has no concept of how to control. In North Carolina, we see that daily as the ocean takes and deposits sand from beach to beach, as the Cape Hatteras lighthouse begins to fall into the ocean, as tornadoes rip through the foothills, as hurricanes come up the coast, as a late frost claims 85 percent of the peach crop. To be honest, we need more Shamen to warn men to be more aware of the fragile balance that exists between man and nature.

...Man is only a small part of the web of life. If we spit on the ground, it will come back to haunt us. And it has, because we have spit on the earth too many times.

Thanks for making us think, Mark. And thanks for your work...

Wally Harrington
4123 Wallingford, Durham NC 27707

NEVER 'FEAR'

This is just a "quick" note to say that No. 10 was probably the best issue so far—and that's saying a lot! I dunno. Maybe it's just me. Maybe it's just taken me a bit of time to really get into the Xenozoic Age. (Or should I say "a lot of time", given your rather "sparse" publishing schedule?) Don't get me wrong. I've enjoyed the previous issues very much. There have been

many interesting stories, an interesting "backstory" to the goings-on from issue to issue, good characterization, and, of course, excellent art. But now, for me at least, the theme of the series has come to the fore and that has bumped everything up a notch, so to speak.

Naturally, that theme—of how humankind can live on this Earth in harmony with nature—is an important and timely one. Quite apart from the situations of the characters, such matters are of great weight to us all and thus cause us to think once again of what our place on this Earth is and should be.

My own objection so far is that the opposite sides have been portrayed as too clear-cut. Jack and the Blood Mechanics are totally right and sincere, while their opponents are scheming scoundrels who refuse to see the light and are a rather disreputable lot to boot.

I would have thought that it would be more normal, as it has been throughout human history, for things to be rather less clear than that. Sometimes, the proper thing to do is well known, but more often it is very difficult to determine the best course with the crush of events swirling all around you...However, I realize that the True Way may be apparent due to the disasters that befall humankind and that some at least learned a great deal from those events. But still, an aura of certainty in human affairs is rare—and often misguided even when it exists.

It bothers me a bit to see that Jack's opponents (the main one, certainly) are portrayed as less than admirable individuals. People of good will may still disagree on many things. Your opponent may be motivated by different factors than you, or may even be misguided, but that does not necessarily mean that they are ruthless or evil.

That said, I acknowledge that this has been a very well thought-out series and therefore my above objections may very well be dealt with in future issues and my "fears" diminished.

And despite my crack about your publishing schedule, I applaud your decision to maintain the quality of this series even if it means a "slow" rate of publication. The common wisdom seems to be that it is essential to crank out material quickly and indeed a regular publication schedule is desirable if it will not interfere with the artistic merits of the series. Once something is published it is there for all time, and if I must choose between quality and quickness, I'll take quality.

T.M. Maple/Jim Burke
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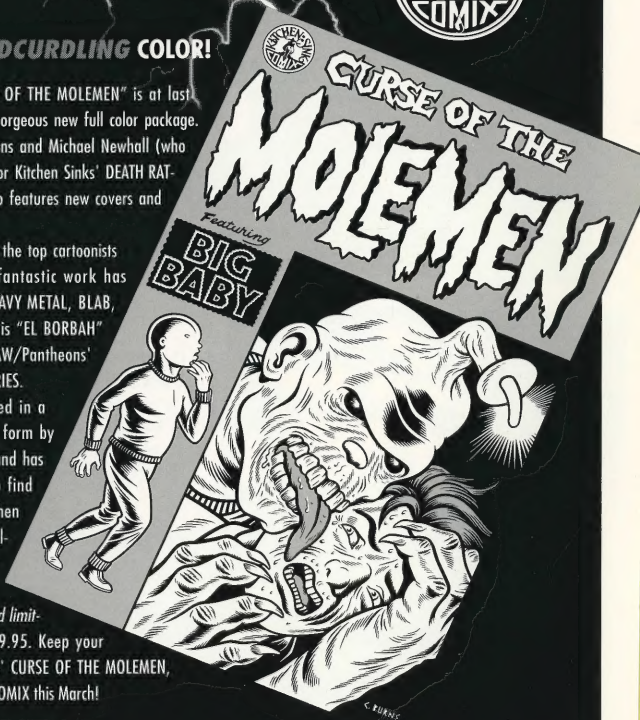


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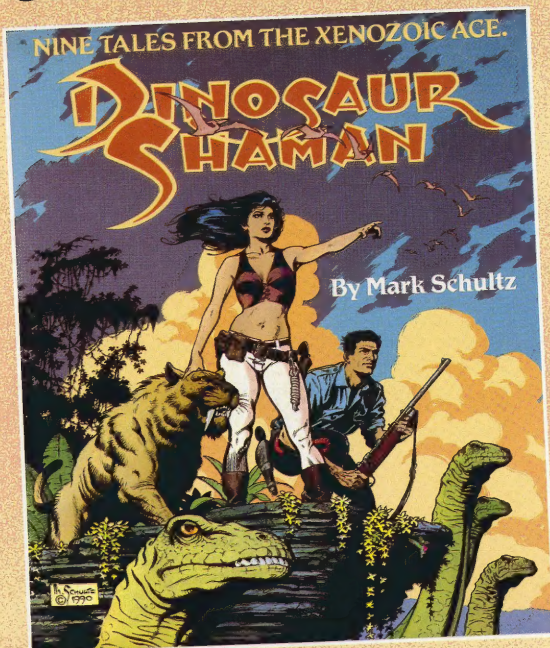
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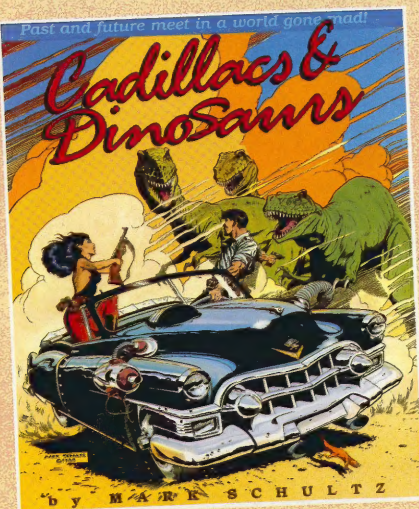


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